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SUBJECT: 42ND MEETING OF THE JMG TASK FORCE

REF: KINSHASA 886

1. (SBU) The 42nd meeting of the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) Task Force was held October 10 in the Rwandan border town of Gisenyi. All key Task Force members were present. The Task Force agreed upon a document prepared by the Chairman (the U.S. Office in Goma currently holds the rotating chair of the JMG) that would help ensure JMG coverage of all pertinent aspects of the Nairobi Communique implementation. The Task Force dedicated a significant amount of time to the previous meeting's minutes, as well as to the issue of where the next Task Force meeting should be held. Rwanda is asking to hold the next meeting in Gisenyi again, while the Congolese want the venue to return to Goma. End Summary.

2. (SBU) The JMG Task Force meeting began with a presentation by the Chair (United States, Geoff Parker) of a technical working paper listing all items in the Nairobi Communique requiring implementation that the Task Force should be monitoring. The paper was drafted by the Chairman based on a discussion at the previous meeting during which Task Force members identified areas of interest with regards to the Nairobi Communique. Specific categories included military and political "sensitization" (awareness) activities (both DDRRR and national/ international media), human rights, and links to other international mechanisms, such as the Amani Program, the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM), and the Tripartite Plus. Within each category the Task Force identified key stakeholders and indicators. The categories will be used to ensure the JMG regularly prioritizes and monitors all pertinent aspects of Nairobi implementation through weekly discussions, guest speakers, or field visits.

3. (SBU) The discussion of the previous meeting's minutes was, as usual, the most contentious item on the agenda. Disagreement revolved around the Rwandan delegation's insistence that a sentence be added to capture their disappointment with the issue of alleged FARDC-FDLR collaboration. No sentence had been added initially because the issue had been mentioned tangentially towards the end of the previous meeting and had not been discussed. Other Task Force members agreed that since the issue was well-known and had already been noted in previous minutes, it did not add much value to the permanent record of the 42nd meeting, except to underline the continued inability of the Task Force to effectively address the issue. In the end, the Rwandan delegation relented and the sentence was not added. The Task Force agreed, however, to dedicate a portion of the MONUC permanent weekly record to catalog issues on which the Rwandan and Congolese delegations cannot agree.

4. (SBU) The issue of FARDC-FDLR collaboration brought about a discussion of the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM). All Task Force members agreed that the JVM was the appropriate forum in which to raise such topics. Since the JVM was a common topic of discussion, as well as a rare item upon which both the Rwandan and Congolese delegations agreed, members decided to refer the issue to the special envoys to obtain necessary support from the political level to re-energize the mechanism. (Note: Congolese MFA Mbusa sent a letter dated October 9, contained in reftel, to SRSB Doss requesting activation of the JVM to investigate GDRC claims of Rwandan Defense Force -- RDF -- support for CNDP leader Laurent Nkunda. End Note).

5. (SBU) The Task Force also addressed the question of location for

future meetings. The Rwandans continued to insist that the lack of security in Goma -- as well as the somewhat negative perception of MONUC by the local population -- made the situation in town "explosive." A meeting in Goma was therefore, at least temporarily, out of the question, in their view. The Congolese, on the other hand, felt that meeting in Gisenyi violated the Task Force's working modalities and was a practice that should not be continued without special envoy consent. Both sides are considering options, including the possibility of an armed MONUC escort from the border to the conference room on one of the MONUC bases in Goma.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: The Rwandans, who requested that the meeting be held in Gisenyi over Goma because of security concerns, opposed paying for a conference site. The Rwandans did agree, however, to find a site for future meetings on the Rwandan side of the border. (Note: Embassy Kinshasa decided at the last minute to pay for a room in Gisenyi hotel to avoid the JMG meeting being canceled for the second week in a row. This is not an issue in Goma, where MONUC hosts all JMG meetings. End note.) Nonetheless, the issue of where future JMG meetings are to be held is not resolved as the GDRC is reluctant to hold future meetings in Gisenyi without special envoy endorsement. Give persistent Rwandan concerns about security in Goma, the meeting as scheduled on Friday, October 17 is not certain at this time. End Comment.

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